



The President's Daily Brief

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8 AUGUST 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Recent developments in Cambodia are discussed on
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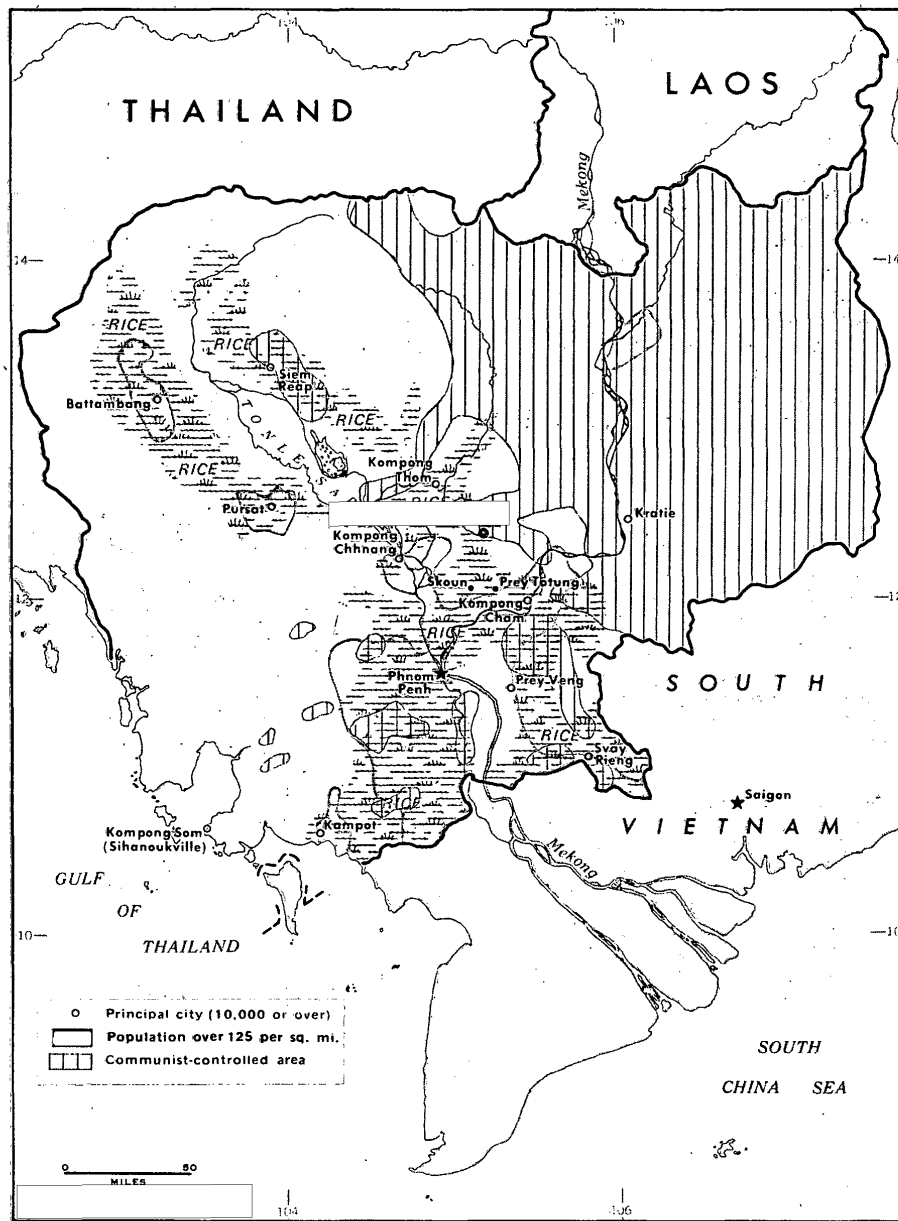
Some Bonn officials are concerned that a large refugee rally to be held in West Berlin will complicate the four-power talks on Berlin. (Page 3)

The Soviets have deliberately raised a very sensitive issue in their territorial dispute with China. (Page 4)

The USSR may be planning a Venus probe for sometime in the next two weeks. (Page 5)

The Uruguayan Government has stuck by its decision not to negotiate for the release of the kidnaped foreigners. (Page 6)

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CAMBODIA: Current Situation

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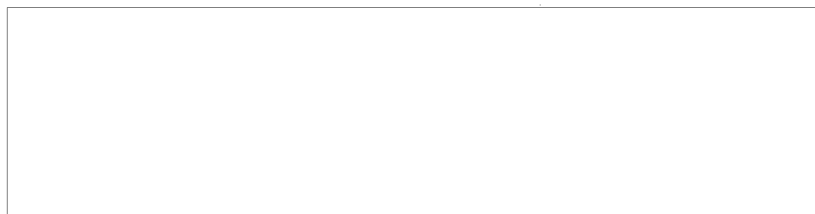
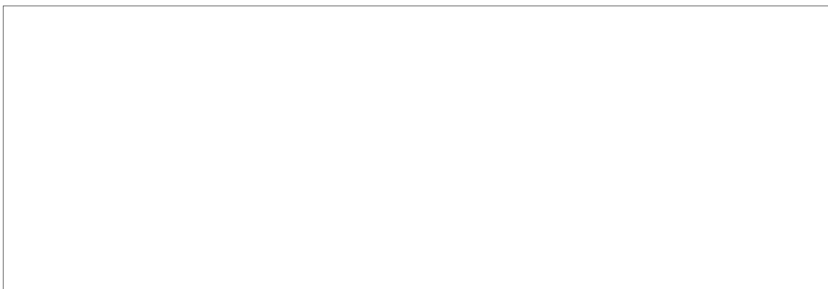
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CAMBODIA

Khmer Krom troops, supported by air strikes, finally succeeded in recapturing Skoun early today, according to press reports. No casualty figures were announced, but Cambodian losses apparently were light. East of Skoun, government defenders in the town of Prey Totung continued to stave off Communist harassing attacks. In the west, the enemy continues to harass Kompong Thom with intermittent mortar fire, but no new major ground actions have been reported.

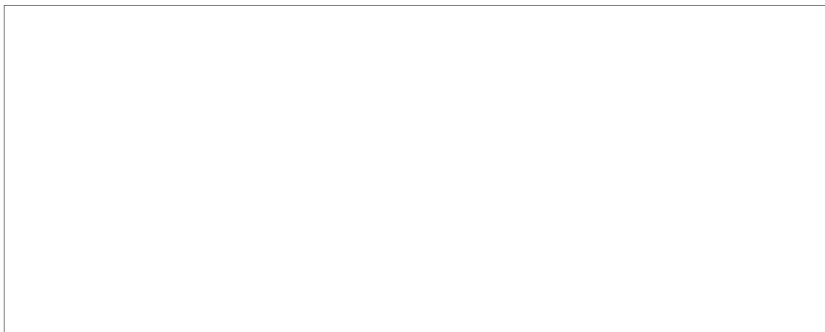
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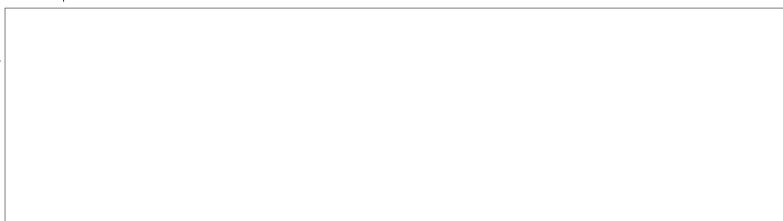
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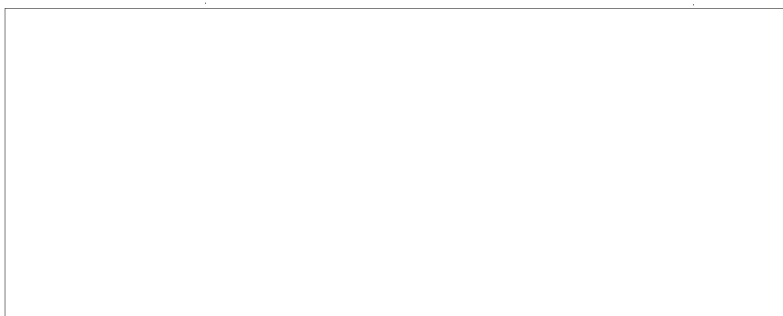
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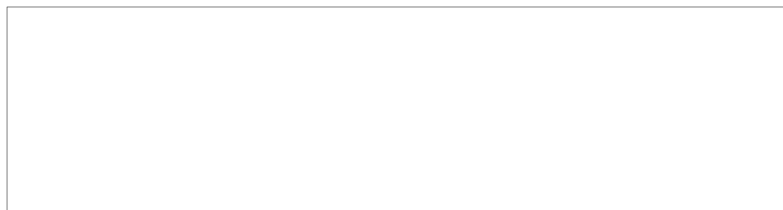
ARAB STATES



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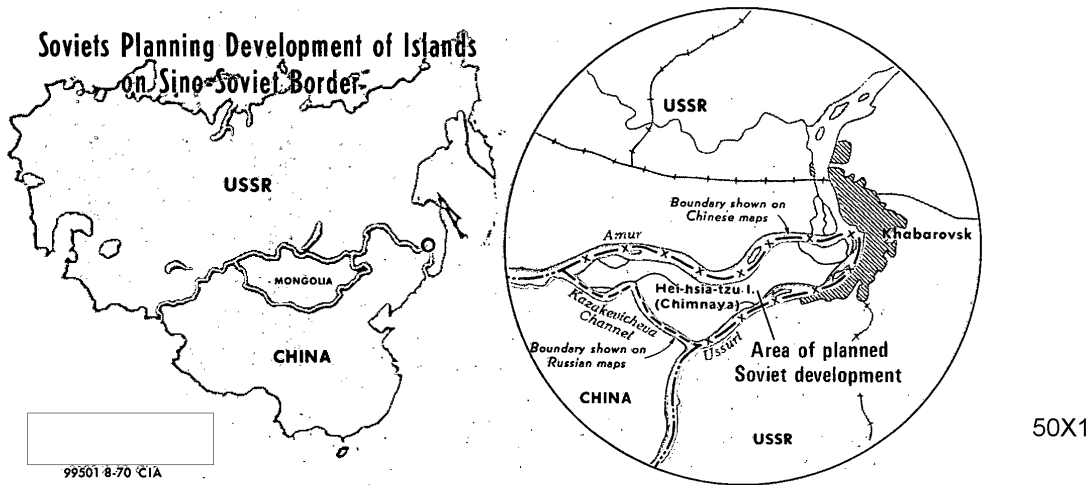
WEST GERMANY

Some Bonn officials are concerned that the annual rally of German refugees from Eastern Europe (Tag Der Heimat) to be held in West Berlin on 6 September will complicate the next session of the four-power talks on Berlin.

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The West Germans have all but directly requested that the Western allies use their legal authority to ban the rally. Bonn wants to avoid being associated with such a move because of the political repercussions at home. Bonn nonetheless probably is genuinely concerned that the rally could unwind the delicate threads of its Eastern policy both at home and abroad.



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USSR - COMMUNIST CHINA

We have now received and analysed the full text of that recent Soviet press article concerning plans for extensive agricultural development on an island area at the confluence of the Ussuri and Amur rivers opposite Khabarovsk--a key Soviet Far Eastern city and headquarters for the Far East Military District. The island area, by far the most important of the more than 700 islands in the Amur and Ussuri, is subject to conflicting claims by Moscow and Peking. The Chinese have a good legal case based on international law to support their claim to the area, and Moscow realizes this. Nevertheless, Soviet officials believe its continued control is essential because of its strategic location, just a stone's throw from Khabarovsk.

The Soviets were clearly aware that the appearance of these plans in an authoritative journal can only be interpreted by Peking as a direct challenge. Until the appearance of the article, both sides had carefully avoided public mention of the islands off Khabarovsk since the border talks got under way last October. Moscow is now clearly bent on enhancing its claim to the area, and wants the Chinese to get the message loud and clear that the Russians consider the islands Soviet territory and thus not subject to negotiation. Peking will see the move as a deliberate provocation, and may counter with a "development program" of its own for other disputed territories. Although the appearance of the article probably will not cause the collapse of the talks, it clearly underscores the lack of movement in the negotiations, and bodes ill for their future progress.

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USSR

There are indications that the launch of a Venus space probe is planned for sometime in the next two weeks. Support ships are nearing positions from which they could monitor the insertion of a space probe on a path to Venus, and the relative positions of Venus and the Earth are favorable. The next opportunity does not occur for 18 months.

Past Venus probes have been launched using a small booster based on the SS-6 ICBM. The next one, however, may be launched by the larger SL-12 space booster; at least

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The SL-12, however, has been completely successful in only six of 18 launch attempts to date.

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NOTE

Uruguay: The government has stuck by its decision not to negotiate for the release of the kidnapped USAID official, the Brazilian diplomat, and the US agricultural specialist abducted yesterday. The Tupamaros had given the government until midnight last night to agree to release all political prisoners or they would "pronounce sentence" on all three. The deadline passed without any indication of the fate of the men.

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